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SERMON DCV.

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FACE TO FACE.

"Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you and speak face to face, that our joy may be full."—2 JOHN, 12.

How many things have I had to write to you in that long year of absence now mercifully closed! Things relating to my own personal welfare, which *you* have regarded in thought and in prayer with an interest so kind and so constant; things relating to your prosperity, upon which *I* have dwelt continually in thought and in prayer; things of God's providence and grace, as illustrated in the new and varied experiences of the year, in the observation of different countries and nations, in the fulfilment of prophecy, and in the daily confirmation of the Scriptures in the land where they were written;—things for thanksgiving, for exhortation, for admonition, for edification in knowledge and in holiness,—how many such things have I had to write to you, when other occupations claimed the hour, or when for very weariness the pen refused its office. At such times I have said, "I will not write with paper and ink, but will leave all these lessons and teachings of the year to be uttered by word of mouth;"

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—for I trusted, always, that through a gracious Providence, I would come to you again, and speak face to face. Yet, now that I have come, and do speak face to face, I cannot speak at all of the many things I had to write by reason of the fulness of joy in once more meeting with you and speaking to you. All the many things that so crowded the mind and labored for utterance when oceans and continents intervened, and there was no medium of communication but paper and ink, have for the moment vanished into oblivion. In this first ecstasy of speaking face to face, the liberated tongue demands other and fresher themes than those which have occupied the mind during the wandering exile of a year. As the traveller returning to the bosom of his family, would enjoy awhile the faces of his wife and children, and indulge the feeling that he is at *home*, before he entertains them with his own adventures and experience, so would I, as a pastor, enjoy the *social feeling* of a re-union with Christian friends, forgetful of the observations and experiences hoarded up even for their benefit during a long and trying absence. Those many things will, doubtless, come up again in their proper time and place; enough that now through the good Providence of God, I have come to you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.

This very circumstance suggests the theme of my discourse: **VIZ: PERSONAL AND SOCIAL COMMUNION AMONG CHRISTIANS, NECESSARY TO THE COMPLETENESS OF THEIR JOY.**

The social feeling is a vital element of our nature, and fit society is indispensable to the perfection of happiness. Indeed it would seem that this is necessary, not only for beings constituted and related as we are, but for every intelligent being. There is society among the angels of heaven; there is society in the being of God himself.

It may help us to understand the mystery of the Trinity if we regard this philosophical law of being in its application to the Infinite mind. I would not say that the triune existence of Jehovah, as revealed to us in the Scriptures, is the necessary mode of Divine existence, but I do believe that it is the mode in which God has existed from eternity, and not merely a special manifestation of himself for the work of man's redemption. I cannot see how, without some such mode of existence, the divine Being could have been happy, before the creation of angels and men. God is love. But love requires an object commensurate and responsive:—something worthy of it, and that can answer to it. This is necessary, in order that he who loves may find his own perfect happiness in that love. We may, indeed, love unworthy and inferior objects, or objects that do not reciprocate our affection; and in the feeling of benevolence toward these we may find happiness as compared with a state of indifference, or with the opposite feeling. But to know the full joy of love we must have an object commensurate with our ca-

capacity for loving ;—something that can worthily claim our whole heart, and that can and does respond to our affection. If, therefore, God did not exist in distinct persons capable of mutual love, then in all the eternity that passed before the creation there was absolutely nothing that God could love. But without love, it is not possible that the happiness of a moral being could be complete. Mere existence does not bring to such a being the fulness of joy,—mere intelligence or power does not complete his happiness. He demands something more, and that is the exercise and the satisfaction of his moral nature in *love*. Now, to deny the Trinity in the Godhead, is to deny to God any object of love, any source of happiness in that long, long period when there was no creation to employ his thoughts and to fill his affections : it is to leave the infinite mind whose very life is love, without love, and therefore without life, for want of an object to call it forth. But the existence of the Supreme Being in three persons, relieves this difficulty. For what infinite joy must there have ever been in the communion of the three persons in the Godhead, one in substance, in thought, and in action, equal in power and glory, reflecting each the other's love, and speaking face to face. Hence the wonderful depth and fulness of the declarations of the Father respecting the Son, "My beloved Son ; my well-beloved Son ; in whom I am well-pleased ; in whom my soul delighteth ;" and hence, also, the longing of the Son to be again with the Father in the glory which he had with him before the world was. There is society in the divine Being—the mysterious, the transcendent fellowship of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—these three in one, perfect in love, speaking face to face, and ever abiding in the fulness of joy.

There is society among the angels of heaven. These were not created mute and solitary. Their worship is a social worship. The Seraphim that surround the throne are not silent emblems of the glory of the Lord ; they are living creatures, with intelligence, with affections, with social feelings :—they cry *one to another*, stimulating each other "to yet loftier praise—they cry one to another, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts." Their song is a unison, or a chorus ; they are "an innumerable company ;" seldom do they go forth on solitary errands, but in chosen pairs or in glittering hosts do they visit the earth upon errands of judgment or of mercy.

Conceive of the creation of one solitary being to occupy the vast physical universe. He finds himself surrounded with the grandeur and the ever-varying beauty of the material creation. From the minutest atom to the sublimest orb, all is open to his inspection. His faculties are not limited by a dependence upon physical senses, but with a spiritual intuition he discerns the most subtle laws of nature, and traces each fact and movement to its remotest cause. Yet, notwithstanding this quick perception of material phenomena, so vast is their number, and so end-

less their variety, that his mind may find unceasing and untiring employment upon the works of the Creator, and the attributes of God that these display. To him is given the highest range of knowledge, and the highest intellectual pleasure possible to a created, and a finite mind. Moreover, by introspection he learns the laws of his own being; he studies mind, its nature, its capacities, its exercises, its affections—all its intricate and mysterious phenomena;—he finds within himself a spiritual world as vast and as inexhaustible as the material world around him—a world that can enfold within its thought the whole material creation, as the crystalized glass enfolds the curious forms of the artist—trees, plants, flowers, birds, animals, earth, sea and sky, all forms and combinations of material things held within the crystal, and seen through it as through a lens;—and in this pure spiritual world, also, as in a mirror, perceiving the face and the glory of his Maker, he rejoices in himself as the image of God.

Moreover, it is given to this being to hold intercourse with his Maker;—not merely to render homage, but to approach with filial confidence the throne of Infinite Majesty; to give and to receive love; and in that love to find peace and joy unbounded and eternal. He, the sole offspring of God, may tread as a son his Father's courts; may know, as a son, his father's counsels; may share, as a son, his father's delights;—yet must this intercourse be reverential, and, in part, reserved, the approach of the inferior to the superior, of the subject, though a son, to the Sovereign, though a father,—the approach of the finite to the infinite. The society of the creature with the Creator, cannot be like the society of the persons of the Godhead; the creature cannot fathom the thoughts of the Creator, much less can he enter into his counsels as an equal. It is his only to receive, to acknowledge, to love, and to adore. His happiness is the highest possible to his condition, but not the highest of which we can conceive. When enraptured with the beauties of the physical creation he exclaims, "How beautiful, how sublime," he meets at most an echo to the outward ear,—not a response to the inward soul. When looking upward with adoring love, he cries "How glorious Thou;"—though he meet an approving smile, he feels no sympathetic chord vibrating in unison with the innermost fibres of his being, thus stirred at the presence or the thought of God. Communion with God he may enjoy; but for that simpler heart-fellowship that his nature craves, he is alone in the wide universe. Sympathy, companionship he has none; and wanting these, he wants also the *fullness* of joy.

A solitary being thus created in the heaven of thought, would be like a solitary star in the material heaven, which, though pure and radiant as the eye of God himself, would yet wander on in the blackness of darkness for ever. But add to this another and another, and as light answers to light, the scene is already brightened, and the responsive rays break the solitude of univer-

sal gloom. Add now to these a glittering host, and while darkness vanishes the morning stars sing together, and the sons of God shout for joy. Thus it is in heaven. There is no solitary praise, no single lyre ; but one grand unison or oft-recurring chorus, as Cherubim and Seraphim, telling their raptures, answer each other face to face.

When the first man was placed in Eden, he was not wholly without society. Angels were his ministers. These elder ranks of the creation assisted this their younger brother with their instructions, and cheered him with their songs. But more especially did his Maker condescend to become his companion ; and in the cool of the day the Lord God would appear to Adam under some visible form—resplendent yet supportable by his unfallen vision ;—would walk with him in the garden, and talk with him as a father with a child. Yet his Maker knew that there was a great void in the life of this infant creature ; that an element of his being, essential to the completeness of his happiness, was not satisfied by anything in his surrounding circumstances. It was not enough that, made a little lower than the angels, the head of the whole animal creation, and holding daily fellowship with his Maker, he was placed in a garden of perfect beauty, to dress it and to keep it, and as the vicegerent of heaven, was commissioned to have dominion over this new world. It was not enough that his whole sentient nature was gratified, that all his powers of intellect were employed, and that his moral being was developed to the utmost, under the immediate tuition of Jehovah ;—his social nature was not satisfied ; his sympathies as a man were not met ; his soul found no responsive element in the whole creation amid which he dwelt ;—for he had not there one equal companion. He could hold no communion with the animal world ; and his intercourse with angels, and much more with God himself, was that of the younger with the elder, of the inferior with the superior ; wanting in the element of sympathy, of a full correspondence, which gives its charm to the society of equals.

Therefore the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone ; I will make him an help meet for him : " I will provide for him a companion suited to his nature and his wants ;—and he gave him such a companion,—made like himself, made from himself, whom he could love as his own, whom he could converse with as his consort ;—not through such media as had heretofore given him intercourse with the spirit-world—but *face to face*. What joy was added to our first father by this gift, is expressed by his own rapturous declaration of devotion to his Eve, and is thus happily rendered by the poet of the *Paradise lost* and regained :

"Thou hast fulfilled
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
Giver of all things fair ! but fairest this
Of all thy gifts."

And most fitly does the poet represent the joy of our first parents in each other as finding its highest expression in the united adoration of their Maker.

"When at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,
Both turned, and under open sky adored
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,
Which they beheld; the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole:—Thou also mad'st the night,
Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day,
Which we, in our appointed work employ'd
Have finished, happy in our mutual help
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
Ordain'd by thee."

Man now enters upon his existence in the social state. However isolated the place of his birth, he is, nevertheless, ushered into the family, and is trained in the society of others. But the family—except in its first formation,—is not constituted upon the principle of elective affinity. It is society, but not *chosen* society. God setteth the solitary in families; and this organization is designed at once to meet and to develop the social feeling in man. Yet the mere family relation does not do this in perfection. It is too much a necessary thing or a thing of course—there is too little volition in it. Parents know why they love their children and delight in their society; and by and by children come to understand why they love or ought to love their parents, and why home is so much better than any other place on earth, and nothing so delightful as, after a season of separation, to see again father and mother face to face. When, for a season, a family is scattered, letter-writing, however full and frequent, cannot sustain the interest or supply the want of *home*. However many things may be said with paper and ink, and however pleasant may be the notes of travel in each day's budget, it is reserved for the re-union—the speaking face to face—to complete the joy. Then what was written must be again told with a fresh interest. But not all families are thus happy; and sometimes one and another member of the family circle is constrained to go outside of that circle in quest of the living social sympathy that every human heart instinctively craves. Brothers and sisters grow up loving each other, at first they know not why;—until the development of character weaves some cord of elective affinity that draws them into a closer, fuller sympathy. Yet, in the course of years, it comes to pass that father and mother, brothers and sisters, and early home are all forsaken for a new love, wholly elective, that alone can meet the inmost yearning of the soul—and in which all the experiences, the desires, the thoughts, the hopes, the aims, of two sympathizing and congenial minds, guarded from all the world beside, are opened to each other, face to face.

Man is by nature social. A life of continuous solitude does

violence to his individual constitution, and to the constitution of the world in which he lives. God places him in society from the first. But this family organization, with all its resources and adaptations for happiness, does not, in our fallen state, meet all the wants and the capacities of man as a social being. In this alone he cannot find the *fulness* of joy.

Outside the family are other circles in whose society the nature of man finds in some respects the complement of itself. Yet these societies are often based upon interest, convenience, or some form of selfishness, and are governed by conventional laws. There is little heart-play in them. The speaking face to face is not always the expression or the occasion of joy. This itself is regulated too much by conventional forms or hampered by motives of interest. There *are* circles of friendship where the heart rules, and where each re-union is welcomed with a gush of joy ; circles whose gathering is longed for by their members as a necessity of life, and in whose atmosphere all is sunshine and peace. No correspondence of the absent can impart to these the life of the present, nor can that life be fully communicated to any who do not participate in it face to face. But such circles are rare and limited. Seldom are they of unmixed purity and loveliness ; and they change perpetually with the change of circumstances and the flight of years. There is no mere society, whether its bond be literature, congeniality, or friendship—however select, and however guarded, that can meet in its fullest, highest measure the social element of the soul.

But though neither the family nor the ordinary arrangements of society can satisfy this feeling, it is met perfectly in that spiritual society composed of the children of God—the true disciples of Christ, and in the communion which these together enjoy. I speak not here of a mere fellowship in a Christian church, but of the society of true Christians ; and of their social communion as the children of God, as distinguished from their private personal walk with God. This communion, I say, alone meets fully man's social nature, and this is necessary also for the completeness of Christian joy. Of course this spiritual communion does not meet those social feelings and sympathies that are specially adapted to the family. It is not a substitute for these. These still have their play. But this communion is added to all other forms of pure and lawful social intercourse, to the family circle, to the circle of business, of politics, of literature, of society, of innocent pleasure, it is added I say to these as the very highest type of social communion,—its only complete and perfect type ; and it may even pervade and elevate all the forms of social life so as to become the one pure and perennial source of social joy. This you may see illustrated on this wise. Let there be a family in which is found the utmost purity, kindliness and mutual love possible without the presence of religion ;—where all the charms of home are blended in the happy circle that never

knows a jar. There seems to be between the several members of that family the fulness of joy in their daily intercourse and their every social sympathy.

Suppose now that two members of this family—a brother and a sister,—are awakened to a new spiritual life in Christ. Thenceforth they are drawn toward each other by a tie they never felt before, and stronger than any that hitherto has bound them. Each has become more lovely in the other's eyes; each has fathomed more deeply the other's soul, and both have felt the power of that all-encircling love that shall hold them in its fulness through eternity. And this is a tie, and this an experience in which they two are bound apart from all other members of the family. They are not selfish in their separation, they have abated none of their former love for the rest of the household; that love is the rather increased by the desire that these also should share in this new experience; but there has come into the bosom of this family, in the hearts of two of its members a new principle of life, that brings out emotions and sympathies before unknown to themselves; and far above all the delights of the family circle, the love of parents and children, of brothers and sisters, is the joy of these two regenerated souls—their joy in each other as they speak of their innermost experiences in language that they only can understand.

Such on a great scale is the joy of Christian communion to those who as the followers of Christ are separated from the rest of mankind. They have no selfish exclusiveness, no want of interest in the family at large;—rather, a deeper, livelier interest in its welfare than any other of its members;—they have no morbid distaste for such innocent pleasures as they have shared in common with the whole family; but they find in each other in their communion as Christians, a joy that far transcends all other joys, and in which those not spiritually renewed cannot sympathize or share.

This spiritual society is entered from choice. No one is born into it, or made a member of it by mere outward arrangements. It is the society of believers. It is founded upon character; upon moral affinities; they who compose it are alike in their principles, desires, and aims, in their one grand object for the present life, and in their hope for the future. They are subjects of the same experience, have known the same deliverance as a prelude to the same joy. And in this is one of the strongest and most peculiar bonds of their sympathy; for, other circumstances being equal, they who have known a common trial or have escaped a common danger, are ever drawn to each other more strongly than those who have known only the even tenor of joy.

Moreover, by their experience and their principles they are a *separate* society, and as such, are the more strongly welded together by the heat of the blows of opposition from without. They are united also in and through one *common* head, and by the

love they bear to Him are strengthened and enlivened in their mutual love ; and they are looking onward to one blessed and eternal home in all the fulness of joy. How could it be then, but that these persons should be held together by the strongest ties, and should find in communion with each other the fullest satisfaction of their social wants.

I say in communion *with each other*. Imagine but two Christians upon the earth, and these separated by its diameter. Each lives in the enjoyment of communion with God, but each is solitary. He knows not of one sympathizing heart in all the world. By and by these two isolated Christians come to the knowledge of each other's existence ; and by correspondence each learns the views and feelings of the other. What a thrill of joy is given by this discovery—and how does each letter with its fresh expressions of sympathy and its developments of character draw them together in bonds of love. And yet how imperfect is their communion,—how incomplete their joy. How does each long to know the *person* that addresses him as a brother, to grasp his hand, to look him in the eye, to hear his voice, and in return to tell him all the heart. Now bring together these two isolated brethren ; let them see each other in the flesh as they have known each other through mechanical instruments. How do their hearts bound, how do their eyes overflow with joy as they speak face to face ; nay, even if through emotion or want of language they cannot speak at all, what a blessed heart-union do they now feel.

The venerable apostle John had great joy in the elect lady and her children to whom he addressed this brief epistle : he knew them well ; perhaps had seen them recently ; he could write them now, but he felt that to speak to them face to face was necessary to his full enjoyment in them as the disciples of Christ. With what joy have I looked in the face those missionaries in distant lands whose names and labors I long had known ; how sweet was that near fellowship in a strange land ; but now that I have come again to *you* and speak face to face my joy once more is full.

This view of the necessity of Christian communion to the perfection of religious joy teaches us that *a monkish seclusion from the world is contrary to the whole genius of the Gospel*.

One of the earliest and most fatal perversions of Christianity was the notion borrowed from the asceticism and seclusiveness of certain old heathen priesthoods, that piety is to be best cultivated in a state of entire seclusion from mankind, amid the solitude and the privations of the hermit's cell. The extent of this perversion in the early ages of the church seems almost incredible to us in an age when there is hardly a nook or corner of the world left for solitude. But all along the brook Kedron from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea, all along the valley of the Nile from the capital of Egypt to the confines of Nubia, in the fastnesses

of the mountains that skirt the Jordan and those also that lift their naked grandeur in the peninsular of Sinai and the deserts of Arabia, you will find cells hewn in the rock or formed from natural caverns that were once the resort of the saints and fathers of the Christian church. Many of these anchorites became such in the first instance by reason of persecution; but by degrees a monkish seclusion was advocated and extolled as the highest type of piety, and thus grew up a system which to this day is the incubus and the curse of all the nominal churches of the East. When Christianity retired to the cell she lost her hold upon society, because a thing exterior to society instead of a vital force within it; and thus arose, instead of a simple faith in Christ, a reverence for saints, and instead of the example and influence of living teachers of the Gospel, the spiritual domination of a privileged class esteemed the favorites of heaven;—thus arose by degrees the debasing superstition, the frivolous ceremonialism and the spiritual despotism that crippled and well nigh destroyed the church of Christ.

The same tendency is seen in certain branches or schools in the church at this day, and in the writings of those Quietists and Pietists who emulate St. Jerome and St. Antony. But no view of Christianity is more important than that which regards it as a social system, adapted to man as God has constituted and conditioned him in this world, a member of the family, of society, and of the state. While the Gospel deals with men not organically but individually and personally, and would first of all bring each individual soul into fit relations with its maker, it yet comes to men not as isolated but as social beings,—who by their very constitution need a *social* as well as a private religious life to develop all their nature, and to perfect their joy. Piety can be cultivated and maintained only by personal communion with God; but the condition most favorable to its development is not a seclusion from the world that does violence to man's social nature.

"We need not bid, for cloister'd cell,
Our neighbor and our work farewell,
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high
For sinful man beneath the sky.
The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us, daily, nearer God."

This view of Christian communion suggests the wisdom and the desirableness of those ordinances and arrangements that are designed to facilitate that communion.

"Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together." No one can maintain an earnest piety who wilfully and habitually neglects the social worship of God.

In a case of the necessary privation of social worship, as often at sea, or to a person shut up in prison, there may be the most

lively flame of piety burning in seclusion. But the ordinary traveller knows that the loss of the prayer meeting and the Sabbath day worship to which he has been accustomed, is the loss of a positive good which he cannot long sustain without detriment to his piety. He, then, who wilfully neglects such means of grace must fall into a state of spiritual decay. If he forsakes the assembly of the saints, so that he does not know his brethren "face to face," it may be questioned whether he knows Christ, and whether Christ will know him as one of his disciples in the last day.

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Christian communion, of fellowship in the commemoration of his death, as distinguished from the sacrifice of the mass, in which the priest officiates apart from the people.

Finally. This view of Christian communion *suggests delightful anticipations of the blessedness of heaven.*

Our joy here is not complete, because our circle is not complete. After a year's absence I see you face to face; but I see not all who once were here. The seats that were vacant when I left are vacant still, and others are vacant also; and a place in the heart is vacant because of these. My feet have trod the streets of *Jerusalem*; I have walked about *Zion*, and have counted her desolated towers, and have now returned to tell you, not of her glory, but of her degradation. But they who have gone to the *New Jerusalem* come not back to tell us of its glory. Once safely over this life's treacherous ocean, they essay it not again, not even to grasp the hand or soothe the bleeding heart of love. Rather, they come not again in the body—they are no longer visible to these mortal eyes. Yet may we still believe them present, and even to-day partakers in our joy.

"O soothe us, haunt us, night and day,
Ye gentle spirits far away,
With whom we shared the cup of grace,
Then parted; ye to Christ's embrace,
We to the lonesome world again,
Yet mindful of the unearthly strain
Practiced with you at Eden's door,
To be sung on where Angels soar,
With blended voices evermore."

Oh! welcome the day when we shall again with them take up that strain within the heavenly city; when face to face with those we here have cherished, we shall recount the loves, the joys, the cares, the griefs, the toils and dangers of the way, until at length we lose all these and lose ourselves in the fulness of eternal joy.

Heaven is a family. We shall yet see all its members, and know them face to face. Who does not find in this prospect an added element of joy? I could not be content always to know the patriarchs and prophets as mere historic personages. It is

not enough that I have pitched my tent upon the plains of Mamre, and held invisible communion with the Father of the Faithful :—I must yet see Abraham, the Friend of God. It is not enough that I have pillowed my head at Bethel, where Jacob found his bed of stones transmuted into downy ether, tinged with gold ; “ I must climb the ladder that he saw, and see him who, by resolute, persistent prayer overcame Omnipotence. It is not enough that I have stood upon the top of Sinai, and have there read the law given to Moses ; I must yet see the man who, on that mount, amid thunder, and lightning, and earthquake, and tempest, stood unmoved, and talked with Jehovah as friend with friend. It is not enough that I have followed the Shepherd king from Bethlehem to Hebron and from Hebron to Mount Zion, I must yet see the royal minstrel, whose harp has swayed my inmost soul. It is not enough that from the house-top of Joppa, I have looked as did Peter upon the vineyards and the olive-groves, and the deep blue sea, and that other overhanging sea that makes the Paradise of eastern climes, or that at Damascus I have sought out the scenes of Paul’s conversion and instruction, I must yet see the apostles of the circumcision and the uncircumcision, whose conversation I would follow. More than all, most of all, it is not enough that I have walked in the very footsteps of Him who made Palestine the Holy Land, that from Bethlehem to Nazareth, from Nazareth to the Jordan, to the Lake of Tiberias, through all Galilee, and Jewry I have literally followed Christ ; that I have lingered beside the brook Kedron, in the garden of Gethsemane, and on the Mount of Olives, till the cross and the crown became palpable realities ;—I must yet see him face to face.

We see him now, here, in these speaking symbols ; we grasp him by a living faith, till he becomes a personal presence ; but this cannot satisfy. Oh, glorious anticipation of a nearer communion. Oh, blessed meeting, face to face ! Oh, surpassing bliss, to see Him as he is. Then shall we also be like Him, and our joy shall be forever FULL.

SERMON DCVI.

BY REV. WM. M. BIRCHARD,

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HONORING THE LORD WITH OUR SUBSTANCE.

"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase : so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."
—Prov. iii. 9, 10.

Under the old dispensation the divine directions respecting religious observances, and the use of property, were more precise and definite than they are under the new. To the Jews, their mode of worship, their festivals, their tithes, their ordinary and extraordinary sacrifices and offerings were all prescribed ; and from the appointed course no departure was tolerated. Two lambs were required daily for a burnt offering ; on the Sabbath, four ; at the beginning of every month, two bullocks, one ram, seven lambs, and a kid ; and in addition to these, animals were offered at the passover, on the day of pentecost, upon the new year, and on the great day of atonement. These, with the oblation of bread and wine which accompanied them, were for the temple service. Besides these offerings, the first fruits, both of animals and vegetables, were consecrated to the Lord ; and, moreover, a tenth part of his income must be paid by the Israelite, for religious purposes. With him it was in no sense optional whether or not he should contribute to the maintenance of the institutions of religion, nor whether he should contribute little or much. The amount which God required of him was clearly defined, and payment was enforced, if necessary, by the magistrate.

But under the Christian dispensation, this class of duties is less accurately defined. We are not expressly commanded to devote such a portion of our substance to religious purposes, and threatened with temporal pains and penalties if we refuse compliance. Christ, we think, designed that his kingdom should be established and perpetuated without the aid of the civil power. His religion, we rejoice to believe, he meant should be sustained and diffused on the voluntary principle. And we have great reason for gratitude to God that here in our own land this principle is fully recognized, and that the Church is entirely disconnected from the State.

But the fact of our religious duties being unenforced by the civil law has doubtless the effect to destroy, or greatly weaken,

in many minds, the sense of obligation to perform them at all. There are persons in every community who either refuse to contribute any thing for religious or charitable purposes, or who will bestow a mere pittance upon such objects; and that rather to escape importunity than because they recognize God's claims, and admit that his injunctions respecting the use of what he has entrusted to their keeping, have any binding force, so far as they are concerned. Such persons, practically at least, if not theoretically, regard human law as the source, rule, and measure of obligation. They acknowledge no higher law than that of man's enacting. But this surely is a gross perversion and abuse of the voluntary principle. God's requirements of us are altogether independent of human enactments. He has power to enforce his own laws, and vindicate his authority, without any aid from his creatures; and he will do it in his own time and way.

We greatly err if we imagine that we are under less obligation to serve God with our property than were his ancient covenant people. And I know not where we should find authority for affirming that he requires a less portion of our substance than he did of theirs. The New Testament lays down general principles for our guidance, rather than specific rules. It impresses upon our minds the truth that all we have in our possession is God's,—that we are merely his stewards,—and that we must at last render up, at his tribunal, an account of our stewardship. It directs us to possess the spirit and imitate the example of Him "who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." And it sets before us that exemplification of the gospel given in the lives of the primitive believers, "none of whom said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common." Surely these teachings reveal to us the will of God as clearly, and enforce obligation as strongly as could any specific rules, or definite commands.

But when duties are enjoined, whether in the Old or New Testament, we are incited to their performance by the promise of some reward, spiritual or temporal, near or remote. Of this, our text is an example. It contains a precept and a promise,—an injunction and a motive for complying with it. The precept is, "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase;" and the promise is, "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." We will consider,

I. *The duty here enjoined.*

II. *The encouragement presented for its performance.*

I. *What is it to honor the Lord with our substance?* It is so to hold and use it as to manifest our supreme regard for his authority and will. It is to devote it to such purposes as he has prescribed in his word. It is so to employ it as to secure the

greatest amount of human happiness. It is to make such a disposition of it as to promote the highest welfare of ourselves, our families, and the world at large.

We honor the Lord with our substance when we sincerely dedicate it, with ourselves to his service, at the time of our conversion. We honor him with it, when we use it with a grateful and obedient spirit, to supply our physical wants, or to cultivate our minds, and enrich them with useful knowledge. We honor him with it, when, with disinterested motives, we devote it to some purpose whereby the public interest or convenience will be promoted. We may even honor him with it when we lay up in store a *reasonable* supply for the necessities of old age, or for the future subsistence of those who are dependent upon us.

But we do *not* honor the Lord with it when we use it for purposes of display, or of mere self-gratification,—when we employ it to pamper pride, vanity, ambition, or any of those lusts which war against the soul, nor when we use it for our maintenance while spending our months and years in idleness, nor when we hoard it up in needless profusion, either for ourselves or our children.

But the text has especial reference to that honoring of the Lord with our substance which results from devoting it to religious and charitable purposes. God is honored by us—

1. *When we relieve the physical wants of our fellow creatures.* In his providence he makes great inequalities to exist in the condition of men. Some he subjects to pinching penury, and upon others he bestows a profusion of the good things of this life. The one class he tries with poverty, and the other he tries with wealth. The former is called upon to honor him, more especially, with a patient, submissive, contented mind; and the latter with a beneficent and liberal distribution of his superfluous possessions. To those that have, God has made it the duty to impart to those that have not. Opportunities for the display of beneficence are never wanting, for the poor we have always with us, and whensoever we will, we may do them good. No plea will excuse us from obligation to minister to the necessities of the suffering poor, if a kind Providence have furnished us with the means of doing it. We may indeed, and should be, discriminating in our charities. Some are more worthy of relief than others in the same circumstances. The virtuous poor have stronger claims upon us than the vicious. And some, it may be, by their incurable vices, and perversion of all gifts, may forfeit all claim to our beneficence. Still we must remember that we are more likely to err by withholding than by imparting too freely; and may, perhaps, with little danger, act upon the principle which Richard Baxter laid down for his guidance, who tells us that “in giving, he did not inquire whether the recipients were good or bad, if they asked relief; for the bad had souls and bodies which needed charity most.” It is, indeed, a truth

worthy to be borne in mind, that the vicious poor have, in one view, special claim upon our commiseration, because they have no portion either in this world or in that which is to come. The duty of relieving the needy is one much insisted on in the Scriptures. "To do good, and to communicate, (writes an Apostle,) forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." And the same Apostle directs Timothy to "charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

2. Another mode of honoring the Lord with our substance is by *devoting it to the maintenance of gospel institutions in our own community.* It needs no argument to prove that God is honored where his Sabbaths are sanctified, his worship is celebrated, and his word is dispensed; and that he is dishonored where the Sabbath is profaned, his worship is neglected, and his word and ordinances are unheeded. Everybody knows that without the gospel a people will inevitably sink into infidelity, immorality, and profligacy. Everybody knows that where no sanctuary is, there vice in all its forms abounds, and God is insulted by every kind of wickedness. Every considerate person realizes that he is deeply indebted to the gospel for his security, comfort, and temporal prosperity,—that it has to him a value which he cannot estimate in money. And such being the case, every man is under a moral obligation to contribute to its support. And no one who possesses common honesty will refuse to do it. No one will refuse who has an enlightened regard for his own worldly interests. And especially will no one refuse who has any regard for God's honor, or any concern for the spiritual and eternal well-being of himself and those around him. But granting that the gospel must be sustained, and that every man *ought* to aid cheerfully in its maintenance,—what kind of a support should a people accord to him who ministers to them in holy things? This question is now asked by many with unwonted interest. And doubtless it is time it should be; for an ill-judged parsimony on the part of many of our churches is producing its legitimate fruits, in the diminished number of those who devote themselves to the sacred office. The unanswered call for pastors which is now heard from many of the feeble parishes in all parts of our land, conveys a reproof to the Christian public for not having made suitable provision for their spiritual teachers. The answer to the question how much the minister of the gospel should receive must of course depend upon circumstances. But it is certain that a people disposed to honor the Lord with their substance, will afford him if able, something more than a *scanty* subsistence. They will grant him such a support as will enable him to devote himself to his appropriate work without distraction, or solicitude about his pecuniary concerns. They will not

compel him to study *economy* so much as to be obliged to neglect his professional studies. They will so provide for him as to secure his highest efficiency and usefulness. Nor do I suppose that a people greatly exceed their duty if they enable their pastor to lay up in store something for subsistence in sickness or old age. Those at least who maintain that they ought to do this for themselves can hardly object to his doing of it. Any people, certainly, provided they really possess the ability, will find it no less for their interest, than for their minister's, to furnish him a liberal support. But whatever they contribute, be it little or much, they should bestow cheerfully, not as a charity, but as a debt.

3. I shall here mention but one other mode in which we may honor the Lord with our substance, and that is, *by employing it for the diffusion of the gospel in the benighted portions of the earth.* The religion of Christ is designed for men universally. It is fitted to confer upon all others the same blessings which it has conferred upon us. It is indispensable to the temporal well-being of people of every nation and clime, as well as to the salvation of their souls. The Christian Church is required by the great law of love to give the gospel to the whole world. Christ has commanded his disciples to preach it to every creature. The Church has begun to feel and acknowledge her obligation to obey this command. She has in earnest commenced the work of evangelizing the nations. God has smiled upon her efforts, and is urging her forward by the voice of his Providence. He has opened before her almost every land under the whole heaven. And he has given her the means necessary for accomplishing the great work which he is calling upon her to perform. Nothing seems more certain than that, if she display proper energy and perseverance,—proper liberality and prayerfulness,—the kingdoms of this world will, ere long, become the kingdoms of Christ. But the work which has been devolved upon his church by her Lord, is a work not for a part of her members, but for the whole. Every individual Christian is in duty bound to bear a share of the burden, and cannot either justly or safely throw it off upon others. He who has bought us with a price, my brethren, has made it our duty to do what we can to enlighten and save those who sit in the region and shadow of death: and we can never free ourselves from the obligation to contribute to this object, so long as there exists a single nation or tribe to which the offer of salvation has not been made. And surely no one who has a heart to honor the Lord with his substance, or indeed in any other way, will ask or desire to be excused from aiding in so beneficent and glorious a work.

Let it be borne in mind, however, that not every act of giving even for such objects as have been mentioned, is a compliance with the injunction contained in our text. Would we honor the Lord with our substance, we must have this end distinctly in

view in our benefactions. The man who contributes to the cause of benevolence, no matter how liberally, from ostentation, or to avoid the charge of meanness, or to escape importunity, or merely because he approves of the object, without any recognition of God's claim, or any feeling of obligation, does not honor the Lord. He may perform an act highly useful in its results, and one which brings honor to himself, but it will not be such an one as God has enjoined, and will not secure the honor that comes from him.

And, moreover, if we would honor the Lord with the property which he has entrusted to our stewardship, the offerings we make to him must bear a reasonable proportion to the amount of our possessions. We may *insult* as well as *honor* him with our gifts. The significance and acceptableness of a religious offering does not depend altogether upon its intrinsic value, but also upon the ability of the offerer, and the spirit with which he makes it. The poor widow was highly commended by our Lord for casting two mites into his treasury; but it was because, in the true spirit of self-denial, "she cast in all that she had, even all her living." Had she been anything but a poor widow, she would have received something very different from a commendation from the Saviour. A poor man may honor the Lord by the contribution of a shilling, while a rich one would insult him with the same sum.

II. Let us now consider the *promise* whereby we are encouraged to perform the duty enjoined in the text: "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." We are here taught that God will repay us for our beneficence with temporal prosperity,—that he will reward us with increased substance for the substance with which we honor him. We are told that Christian liberality is the true road to worldly prosperity, to say nothing of the spiritual good resulting from it. Do we believe this doctrine, my hearers? Have we a practical faith in this portion of God's word? For my own part, I see not why it is not as well worthy of credence as the rest of the Bible. I know not why we may not rely upon it as safely as upon any other of the Divine promises. And yet it is but too evident that many, even among the Lord's professed people, have little or no confidence in this particular assurance of his,—not even enough to induce them to verify its truth by experiment. Were there but a practical belief of this promise throughout the Church, the Lord's treasury would never be found empty, and the means would never be wanting for carrying forward any truly benevolent and important enterprise. If we need any confirmation of God's word, we may find it by observing the course of his Providence; for his word and Providence always speak the same language. Solomon gives us in the text the result of his observation; and, probably, no man ever observed more closely and carefully than he. A multitude of witnesses might be cited to

prove that it is profitable to honor the Lord with our substance. Mr. Baxter, whose name I have already mentioned, gives us, in these words, the result of his experience: "This truth I will speak for the encouragement of the charitable, that what little money I have now by me, I got it almost all, I scarcely know how, at that time when I gave most; and since I have had less opportunity of giving, I have had less increase. If we look about us we shall find both on a large and small scale, abundant exemplifications of the truth, that giving to the Lord does not impoverish. When has the American Church enjoyed so much of prosperity, temporal as well as spiritual, as since she entered upon the work of sending Missionaries, Bibles and Tracts, into all lands? And why is God now pouring into her coffers the gold of California, except to enable and encourage her to abound more and more in this work? Does any Christian man, any man who has faith in God, and really believes his word,—imagine that the Church in this land is not the richer for what she has done for the heathen world? She has, indeed, expended millions in her benevolent efforts, but has she not now more millions at her disposal—millions which she can easily spare,—than she ever had before? As with the Church at large, so with particular churches. Show me one that is intent upon honoring God with its substance, and I will show you one that he is prospering. And the same is true of individuals. God honors those who honor him. The liberal soul he makes fat. He fulfils the promise,—“Give and it shall be given unto you,—good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom.” There are, doubtless, exceptions, real or apparent, but such is the general fact. It is a mistake to suppose that beneficence tends to impoverish us. And a still grosser mistake is it to imagine that a community is any the poorer for sustaining gospel institutions among themselves. The gospel, even in a pecuniary point of view, is worth all that it costs. God never designed that it should be, in any sense, a debtor to those that sustain it. And so well is this understood by worldly men, that it is not uncommon for them to build churches and sustain the ministry in places where they own large property, merely because they find their advantage in so doing. Should this place, or, indeed, any other place around us, be deprived of the gospel, it admits of little question that, in a few years, more would be annually expended in vicious indulgences, and in punishing crime, than is now paid for all religious purposes whatever. God so administers the affairs of this world, that our duty and our interest always coincide with each other. There is, indeed, a limit beyond which we are not required to pass, in our contributions to religious and charitable objects. Where that limit is each one must determine for himself. There is little danger that we shall exceed it, but much that we shall stop short of it. We need to bear in mind, my hearers, the claim which God has to our sub-

stance. We need to remember that we are to account to him for the use we make of it, as really as for any other portion of our conduct. Whatever be the amount we possess, we are bound to honor him with it. If God has given us much he requires much of us; and if he has conferred but little, he requires but little. Would we increase our possessions, let us honor the Lord with what we already have; not forgetting another inspired declaration: "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

We are much mistaken, if there is not a tendency in our times, even among some theologians, to a style of thinking, profitable neither to themselves nor to the church, and well calculated to promote the spirit of skepticism. It is the restless *ultraism* of human philosophy, proud of its wisdom, adventurous and presumptuous in its speculation, enriching its fancy sketches and wonderful dreams with the embroidery of genius, startling mankind with new religious theories, scouting all the old paths, sometimes making a bid for the reputation of originality, blazing over the horizon of Scripture thought with secrets from the far-off land, supplementing the Bible, and implying its insufficiency to guide the faith of men. To our apprehension, there is more weakness than wisdom, more darkness than light, more skepticism than faith, more sin than piety, in this course. To the earnest Christian the revealed track is plain enough, entirely sufficient for every want of his intellect and heart: it is a strong and solid pathway, erected across the deep and dangerous marsh of life, on which the discreet and cautious believer is content to tread, and make his way to heaven; yet the wild and furious speculators keep stepping off on either side; and there they are, gasping for breath, sometimes arraigning their Maker, and not at all satisfied to be men. It is dangerous to follow them: one who makes the attempt, will have to jump over so many hedges, as most likely to produce death by a concussion of the intellect. While it is difficult to have much respect for their intellectual habits, we pity them, and earnestly wish that they were wiser men. For legitimate thought, whether in philosophy or religion, we go to all lengths; but of the foolish effort to transcend the boundaries of reason, and usurp the functions of Omniscience, we have a very poor opinion. It is not the sober philosophy that makes the intellect modest, or the heart docile.

The sum, then, of what we would say, is, that the Scriptures are sufficient, all-sufficient for their own purposes. They must so appear to God; and they will so appear to man, whenever he

makes a proper use of them. Our great business is not to decide, *a priori*, what the Bible ought to teach, how much, or how little; but having evidence of its divine origin, to read it and understand it, and then rest in calm and hopeful confidence upon its information. This is the ground to which every soul must come, or be without the quietude of simple faith. It is the ground of highest dignity and greatest glory in respect to the intellect, and equally of obvious duty in respect to the heart. To what higher employment can intelligence aspire on earth, than to converse with its Maker through his word? How else can the heart so well be sanctified and trained for heaven? "Sanctify them through thy truth: THY WORD IS TRUTH." If any man can do better than to read and expound the Bible, believing what it teaches, and seeking to obey its commands, then let him do so; but for ourselves, we must shrink from the awful experiment. We have yet to learn that human speculations are of as much value as divine light.—*N. Y. Evangelist.*

"HAVING NO HOPE."

Ephesians ii. 12.

1. An unconverted and unregenerate state is one of appalling horror. "Having no hope." No hope for this life, no hope for the life to come. No hope living, none for the hour of death, and the day of judgment. An infinite, eternal Future before you, and yet in all that measureless duration of being no signs of life, no ray of light, no blessed experience—an eternal existence before you, and nothing, nothing in all the Past, nothing in all the Future to sweeten and bless it. O, is this your state—the state of a moral, accountable, immortal creature of God—a creature with such capacities for enjoyment, such longings after happiness, with such a Past to look back upon, and so bright an eternity unveiled to your view! "Condemned already"—"having no hope"—"without God in the world."—O, how these fearful words thrill the soul; they are the knell of that state of fixed and eternal despair to which impenitent and unpardoned sin quickly leads a man. And yet you can be thoughtless and gay, and unconcerned—yet you can imagine that all is well—yet you can indulge the pleasures of sin and the world—when you have only to look forward to see written on the door of your death-chamber, and on the stone which marks the place of your sleeping dust, and on the Heavens over you, and on the throne of the living God, and on the bar of judgment, "no hope"—"no hope."
2. The text gives us a vivid conception of the misery and tor-

ment of hell. From that world *Hope* is entirely and for ever shut out. Her sweet voice, her reviving influence, her blessed companionship are never seen or felt there. There is an utter extinguishment of this mighty passion in every breast. The future gives no promise of relief or good. Forth from its infinite depths there comes no voice of consolation or gladness, no ray of peace or beam of light. Darkness and only darkness forever and ever! Misery and only misery forever and ever! Suffering, remorse, abandonment of God, exclusion from heaven, the horrid companionship of hell, forever and ever!—Without change—without mitigation—without relief! Dreariness, sadness, “weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth,” blasphemies, the raging of passion, the reign of despair unchecked, unchangeably, eternally! *Forever, forever!* O, that is the sum of final misery. “No hope” from out the Future. Pain, remorse, separation, darkness, dying, *eternal, eternal!* O, the inconceivable horrors of such a state, such a world! O, on the despairing countenance of that lost spirit I see gleaming in lurid light the fearful words “no hope.” On the walls of his eternal prison where he is doomed to drag out his long and weary existence, I read again “no hope.” On the massive chains which fetter his agonized body and raving spirit “no hope” is seen in glaring brightness. On “the smoke of their torment which ascendeth up before God forever and ever” the inscription once more appears “no hope.” And on the battlements of heaven, and on the rainbow which is round about the Throne, these fearful words again gleam forth. And now a voice breaks on my ear—ten thousand times ten thousand tongues catch up the cry and repeat it—it rolls through the caverns of that despairing world, and breaks in thunder on the ear of Heaven; and O, it is the same sentence which I have repeated to you so often, but now burdened with the sighs of a lost and despairing world—“no hope—no hope—no hope!”—*Rev. J. M. Sherwood.*

FORETASTES OF HEAVEN AT THE CLOSE OF LIFE.

O, the aged, venerable saint, upon whose mild countenance is reflected the soft, holy dawn of Heaven! We more than love, we reverence him. His very deadness to all the affinities of earth, makes us feel that he already belongs to a higher sphere! We linger around his arm-chair as around an oracle, and our spirits bow and worship in the sacred element of mystery which breathes around him. A thousand times blessed is the close of his life, so full of hope and immortality. The soul that can rise above the clouds of earth, can always behold the infinity of Heaven, and, perhaps, every rightly taught man, before God takes him, ascends to a Pisgah of his own from whence to look farewell to the wilderness he has passed in the leadings of Jehovah's right hand, and to catch a glimpse of the promised land, lying in the everlasting orient before him.

Christian biography is rich in examples of such rapturous and peaceful foretastes as often characterize the closing scenes of the eminently pious. Of these, perhaps, the most remarkable is that of the deeply pious and devoted John Janeway. "I am, through mercy, quite above the fears of death, and am going unto Him whom I love above life. O, that I could let you know what I now feel. O, that I could show you what I now see! O, the glory! the unspeakable glory that I behold! My heart is full; my heart is full; Christ smiles, and I cannot choose but smile. Can you find it in your heart to stop me, who am now going to the complete and eternal enjoyment of Christ? Would you keep me from my crown? The arms of my blessed Saviour are open to embrace me; the angels stand ready to carry my soul into his bosom. O, did you but see what I see, you would all cry out with me, "How long, dear Lord? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

Dr. Doddridge, when near his end, said: "Such delightful and transporting views of the heavenly world as my Father is now indulging me with, no words can express."—"Light breaks in! Light breaks in! Hallelujah!" were among the dying words of the pious Blumhart of Basle. Dr. Bateman, a Christian physician, said, a little before he died: "I can hardly distinguish whether this is languor or drowsiness which has come over me; but it is a very agreeable feeling;" and, dying, he exclaimed, "What glory! the angels are waiting for me! Lord Jesus receive me soul! Farewell!" Addison, the English Poet, when near death, called a young man, who was rather indifferent to religion, of his bed side, and while he pressed his hand with tender affection, said to him: "Behold with what peace a Christian can die!"

Such language reminds one of the swan-song, which is sweetest when dying. It is like some of that language of rapture which we find in the Scriptures that trembled, like a thrill of

heavenly joy, upon the tongues of saints ready to depart. Like that of Jacob: "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." Like that of Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Like that of Paul: "I am now ready to be offered, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness!"

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Why should not saints, "on the verge of heaven," share a foretaste of it? They have the assurance, that the Comforter shall abide with them always, and why not peculiarly amid the trying scenes of death? He, as a spirit, has direct access to the spirits of saints to fill them with His consolation and peace. Beyond doubt, also, the soul in its last moments of stay upon the earth, if so far free from its inward affinities with the body, as to see already the glorious realities of that world which it is just entering. Thus Stephen, the first Christian martyr, when his soul was about stoned out of his body, "being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into Heaven, and saw the glory of God, and said, Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God."

These experiences of dying saints are, of course, various in their degree; some are rapturous and ecstatic while others are more calm and peaceful. Some have glimpses of Heaven vouchsafed them, while they, departing, have still sufficient strength to express their feelings; while others, as in the cases mentioned, can only yet give a faint token that joy is breaking upon them through the gloom of death. In this respect, too, there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. Sure it is, that in one form or other, the Comforter is doing his work at the heart.

Such a joyful, peaceful end is to be desired, not only because it tends to take away the gloom from the prospect of death, but also because of its unspeakable blessedness to the dying saint. In that hour, when flesh and heart fail, what must be the joy of such a portion! It is desirable, too, on account of those who stand in tears around our dying bed. It will take away much of the bitterness of their sorrow and bereavement, to see that our death is full of peace and hope. Their farewell looks and words will lose much of their mournfulness when we see their countenances lighted up with an expression which seems to say, "I am going home!" Oh! the deepest of all sorrow is sorrow without hope. The sweetest of all consolation in the hour of bereavement, is the assurance that the spirit of the departed rests—rests forever in the bosom of its God. Afterwards, too, it is the pleasantest of all the duties of love to drop the tears of affection upon the grave of one whose spirit we know to be in the Heavenly Home.—[*The Heavenly Home.*]